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County man wins $1 million playing Michigan Lottery's Cashword

A lucky mistake led to a big payday and a treasure hunt for a Van Buren County man who won $1 million playing the Michigan Lottery's Major Cashword instant game.

"I play Cashword tickets occasionally, but purchasing this ticket was a total fluke," said the lucky player, who chose to remain anonymous. "I asked the cashier for a different game, and she mistakenly handed me this Major Cashword ticket instead. When she realized she gave me the wrong ticket, she offered to give me the game I'd asked for, but I told her I would just keep the Major Cashword ticket instead.

"The next morning, I scratched the barcode, and my wife scanned the ticket on her Lottery app. When $1 million came up on the screen, I felt like I couldn't breathe! I thought it was some sort of prank at first. Once I realized it was real, I put the ticket in a jar and buried it in the yard because I was so paranoid something would happen to it if I kept it in the house!"

"Lottery players find interesting ways to keep their tickets safe after scoring a big win," said Lottery Commissioner, Suzanna Shkreli. "Burying the ticket in a Mason Jar is certainly a unique way to hang on to a winning ticket! Congratulations to the lucky winner on his $1 million buried treasure!"

The 45-year-old player bought his winning ticket at the Speedway gas station, 855 South Kalamazoo St., Paw Paw. He recently visited Lottery headquarters to claim the big prize. He chose to receive his prize as a one-time lump sum payment of about $634,000, rather than annuity payments for the full amount. With his winnings, he plans to pay bills, pay off his home, and save for retirement.

According to the Michigan Lottery, players have won more than $65 million playing Major Cashword, which launched in February 2024. Each $10 ticket offers players a chance to win prizes ranging from $10 up to $1 million. More than $47 million in prizes remain, including two $1 million top prizes and 1,058 $1,000 prizes.

In 2024, Lottery players won nearly $1.8 billion playing instant games.

Lucky Wolf's owner recognized at state tourism conference

A Paw Paw area business was featured as one of three Stories of Inspiration at the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism, held April 15-17, at Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, MI. The Lucky Wolf's Jason Deibler-Love, shown at far left, shared his story with event attendees on the final day of the conference.

A Paw Paw area business was featured as one of three Stories of Inspiration at the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism, held on April 15-17, 2025 at Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, MI. The Lucky Wolf's Jason Deibler-Love shared his story with event attendees on the final day of the conference.

After Governor Whitmer addressed the audience and mentioned Paw Paw as one of Michigan's standout destinations, Jason Deibler-Love took the stage with Kelly Wolgamott, Vice President of Pure Michigan, to share the inspiring story behind The Lucky Wolf. He discussed how the venue has evolved into a vital cultural hub for the community, offering a space for connection through music, arts, and mental health support. His words resonated with the audience, emphasizing the importance of creating inclusive spaces that foster both creativity and healing.

In late 2021, Jason and his wife, India Love, purchased the Paw Paw Playhouse, a historic theatre and church built in 1857. The two then began building The Lucky Wolf, a community venue complete with a coffee shop, wine shop, cocktail bar, and music venue, as well as a full theatre.

"This was my wife's passion project, she was in love with everything we were doing on the ground floor. She was our branding person, our designer, she did all of it," said Deibler-Love. "My wife's goal here was to create a space that was welcoming for everybody, that can build community through arts, music, good coffee, and good wine."

Tragically, India died by suicide in late 2023, leaving behind Jason and their young children. Since her passing, Jason has continued to honor India's vision by ensuring The Lucky Wolf remained a cultural hub and safe space for the community. In 2024, he launched the India Love Sunflower Foundation, which works to break the stigma around mental health through education, support, and events.

"Paw Paw lacked a dedicated space where people could gather for meaningful cultural experiences, connection, and support, particularly in the areas of mental health and the arts," said Janice Chittle, Marketing Manager of Destination Paw Paw. "The Lucky Wolf has filled this gap, becoming a community hub for music, film, conversation, and healing."

There are also more exciting things ahead for The Lucky Wolf. "We have another big project in development including a historic renovation of a boutique hotel in downtown Paw Paw that I am excited about that I believe will create its own demand to compliment the richness that SW Michigan already offers. Something to bring the community even more together showcasing what Paw Paw already has to offer," said Deibler-Love.

"Since Jason and India founded The Lucky Wolf, it has transformed downtown Paw Paw, driving significant growth in visitors, business, and job creation," said Jennifer Sistrunk, executive director of Destination Paw Paw and Visit South Haven. "Jason has helped revitalize the local economy while creating a vital space for connection and healing in this community. His work proves that even in life's darkest moments, light, healing, and hope can still emerge."

Hartford teenagers honored by Sheriff for putting out fire

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

HARTFORD - Two Hartford teenagers, students at Hartford High School, were recently honored by the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office for their quick actions in putting out a construction trailer fire.

Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott said on March 13, three juveniles set a construction trailer on fire in Hartford. Two teenagers who lived near where the incident took place, the 100 block of 60th Ave., in the City of Hartford, saw individuals fleeing from the trailer that had just been set on fire. Rigo Moreles and Kamryn Johnson ran to the trailer with fire extinguishers and put it out.

"They were able to save the trailer and contents due to their actions," said Sheriff Abbott in a press release. Detectives from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office worked on the arson and were able to develop suspects who were ultimately charged for the incident. Sheriff Abbott said Sheriff's Office detectives were working on other cases involving the same suspects and linked them to this incident as well.

Sheriff Abbott made Moreles and Johnson Honorary Sheriff's Deputies for their actions regarding this incident and swore them in on Monday. The Hartford Fire Department also honored the two with certificates for their actions, two new fire extinguishers, and a photo of them putting out the fire. "It was truly great to see young adults in our community not afraid to do the right thing when it needed to be done. We see incidents across the United States over and over with people not wanting to get involved, so it was great to see these two lead by example," said Sheriff Abbott.

Protest raises $863 for Eleanor's Food Pantry

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More than 150 people demonstrated in Paw Paw as part of the Take America Back protests held around the country on Saturday, April 19. The protests are in opposition to the Trump Administration and Elon Musk's DOGE. Protest organizers also raised $863 in donations for Eleanor's Food Pantry in Paw Paw, which experienced cuts from the United States Department of Agriculture via the Feeding America program.

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The two-hour event included an appearance of a cardboard cutout on the Maple Lake Amphitheatre stage of Rep. Bill Huizenga-R in a 'where's Bill' parody. Protest organizers said Huizenga has refused to hold town hall meetings with his constituents around the Fourth District who have questions about what is happening in Washington.

As the group traveled downtown, they chanted and waved protest signs with various messages. Signs depicted every issue affecting those from the cradle to the grave with the proposed cuts to Medicaid, a program that provides health insurance coverage from prenatal and infant care to the aged living in nursing homes, as well as education, Social Security, the environment, and many others.

While Indivisible Southwest Michigan hosted the protest, many community members joined in the protest to voice their concerns with the Trump administration.

Fishery workshop updated anglers on fishing in Lake Michigan

By James Windell

A room full of anglers ate pizza and listened to speakers at a fishery workshop at the South Haven American Legion Post #49 on Thursday evening, April 17, 2025.

Hosted by Daniel O'Keefe, District Extension educator for the southwest district of Michigan Sea Grant, the workshop featured reports related to fish diets, coded wire tagging and fish stocking. In introducing the program for the evening, O'Keefe said that the Michigan Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Michigan Sea Grant funds and conducts research, education, and outreach projects designed to foster science-based decisions about the use and conservation of Great Lakes resources.

O'Keefe in his introductory remarks said that while some anglers were concerned about a decline in steelhead catches, he said there is no evidence of a decreased population of steelheads.

Brian Roth, the first presenter, is a professor in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University. Roth described his research over the past eight years on fish diets in which he has studied what salmon and brown trout in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are eating. Even though his research is valuable in understanding how fish survive in the Great Lakes, Roth said that his research may be at an end because of funding problems. However, his research finds that many larger fish subsist mostly on goby and alewives.

Following Roth's presentation, Michael Guthard, who is Fisheries Technician at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, talked about the program to insert small metal tags with a numerical code in the snouts of juvenile salmon and trout. The purpose of such tagging, he said, is to track fish movements as well as fish survival in the Great Lakes.

Jay Wesley, Regional Coordinator at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, was the final speaker in the program. He discussed fish movement and stocking, particularly in Lake Michigan.

Wesley indicated his concern that wild Chinook salmon are more numerous than are stocked Chinook salmon. He said that the "relative survival of stocked fish generally decreased from 2011 to 2016."

The DNR, Wesley said, stocks more than two million lake trout, more than a million Chinook salmon, and a million and a half coho salmon every year.

Michigan Sea Grant and Michigan State University Extension, in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Division, USGS Great Lakes Science Center, and local fishery organizations offer evening regional workshops to update anglers on such information as fish populations and angler catch data. In addition, they provide information on prey and forage fish surveys and fish management activities for Michigan.

For more information about future programs, go to //www.canr.msu.edu/michigan_sea_grant/events

Suspect faces charges in Bangor Township domestic assault

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled a domestic assault in Bangor Township. It was found that the suspect was on parole and assaulted his father prior to running from the scene before Deputies arrived. "Deputies searched the area but were unable to locate the suspect that night. The next day, an intense search was done, and the suspect was eventually located and put into custody. The suspect now faces numerous charges," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

Holtec (Palisades) was scheduled to perform an emergency preparedness drill on Wednesday, April 23. The sirens were scheduled to go off at approximately 8 and 8:15 a.m. "Just an FYI in case you were not aware and heard them going off," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a dog at large running down M-43 Highway in Waverly Township. The deputy was able to slow down traffic and catch the dog prior to it being hit or running off. The dog was returned to the family member watching it for another family member.

Platinum Powersports, Coloma, has loaned the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Marine Division two jet skis through the Yamaha Law Loan Program. They will be stationed in South Haven where the primary use will be for patrol and water rescue on Lake Michigan and the channel. "The South Haven Elks Club 1509 made a $500 donation and that will be used for the purchase of a PWC rescue board that attaches to the back of the jet ski to assist pulling victims out of the water. Last summer, five lives were saved by the Marine Division right off South Beach. We are again this year putting on extra patrols in the marine division throughout the summer months," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled an animal cruelty call in Antwerp Township. "It was found through the investigation the suspect shot the neighbor's dog because he was tired of it barking," said Sheriff Abbott. The dog survived the incident and was treated by a veterinarian. Charges are being sought for the incident.

"I was able to honor two local teens in Hartford. The kids observed some juveniles light a construction trailer on fire and flee the scene. Before the fire got out of control, they ran over with fire extinguishers and put it out. By their actions, they saved the trailer and contents. Kamryn Johnson and Rigo Moreles were sworn in as Honorary Deputies. Kamryn and Rigo are a true example of stepping up and doing the right thing in our community," said Sheriff Abbott.

"While out on patrol, I stopped a truck pulling a horse trailer with the back gate open going down the road in Bangor Township. I let the driver know why he was being stopped, and he advised he just picked up a pony. Panic set in with him when he was advised there was no pony in the trailer. Before we could back track his travels to locate "Rocket," the Geneva Township deputy checked out with a pony on the side of the road. The driver/new owner followed me back to the scene to recover his pony. The pony was uninjured and appeared to have jumped out at the intersection while he was stopped," said Sheriff Abbott.

A deputy on patrol stopped a quad in Lawton on the railroad tracks. During the investigation on the stop, it was found the quad was stolen recently and that the Sheriff's Office handled that call. The quad was altered and painted by the suspect. The suspect was also in possession of methamphetamine, scales, baggies, pipes, and had a suspended license. The quad was turned back over to the owner/victim, and the suspect was lodged on several charges stemming from this stop.

Remembering Pope Francis

When news spread that the Pope had died, photographer Tom Renner rushed out to get a photo of the three crosses at St. Basil Catholic Church. Parishioners and citizens of South Haven mourn the death of Pope Francis who died of a stroke/heart failure at age 88.

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2ND FRONT PAGE

County Commissioners approve Hazen Street Brownfield Redevelopment Plan

PAW PAW - Van Buren County Commissioners, meeting Thursday, April 10, approved the Hazen Street Brownfield Redevelopment Plan, following a recommendation from the Van Buren County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and with support from the Village of Paw Paw. The plan clears the way for a $30.3 million housing development led by DDO Paw Paw, LLC.

The project will bring 66 multifamily rental units and 52 single-family homes to the village over the next five years, starting in spring 2025. It also includes significant public and private infrastructure improvements to support long-term growth and aligns with both the 2024 Van Buren County Housing Target Market Analysis and the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan.

The county will use tax increment financing (TIF) to reimburse up to $9.9 million in eligible redevelopment expenses over a 17-year period, without issuing bonds or incurring county debt. To support rising project costs, commissioners approved a one-time waiver allowing a 4.5 percent simple interest rate on eligible reimbursable expenses.

As part of the agreement, the multifamily units will be constructed in the project's first phase. County officials say the project fulfills a public purpose and helps address local housing needs while improving infrastructure and community resilience.

In another area, commissioners approved the reappointment of Sherry Bennet to the Van Buren Public Transit Local Advisory Council. Commissioners said Bennet has served as a dedicated member of the LAC for numerous years, contributing her insight and support to the mission of accessible and effective public transit throughout Van Buren County.

Bennet's previous four-year term expired on July 1, 2024. Her new term will expire July 1, 2028.

The Van Buren Public Transit Local Advisory Council (LAC) provides critical input and guidance on public transportation needs and services within the county, particularly as they relate to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Commissioners approved updated Van Buren County Planning Commission bylaws as recommended by the Planning Commission.

The revised bylaws provide significant updates in several critical areas, including the addition of explicit provisions for defining, disclosing, and managing conflicts of interest among commission members to promote transparency and ethical governance. Revisions to membership terms and limits are designed to enhance continuity, institutional knowledge, and effective decision-making while supporting regular turnover for fresh perspectives.

The Planning Commission clarified the duties of the planning director, including responsibilities related to meeting records, budget management, and overall administrative support to the commission. Also, meeting procedures were updated to align with state legal requirements, including clarification of quorum definitions, scheduling procedures, and the conditions under which executive sessions may be held.

Responsibilities of the commission officers, including the chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, were more clearly defined to improve accountability and operational effectiveness.

The Van Buren County Planning Commission plays a vital role in guiding land use decisions, development policy, and planning initiatives in accordance with the County's master plan and zoning ordinances.

County commissioners further stated the continued involvement of knowledgeable and experienced members is essential to the successful implementation of strategic growth and land use objectives within the county.

In another area, commissioners approved the reappointment of Tom Motycka and Will Pugsley to the Van Buren County Planning Commission for new terms expiring April 1, 2028.

Commissioners said Motycka and Pugsley have served as members of the Van Buren County Planning Commission and have demonstrated a strong commitment to responsible planning practices and community development. They further stated their service has contributed to the stability and institutional knowledge of the commission, and both individuals have expressed a willingness to continue their service to the county in this capacity.

Commissioners said the current terms of Motycka and Pugsley are set to expire, and their reappointment will ensure continuity and support the effectiveness of the Planning Commission's ongoing work.

Commissioners approved a request from the Family Division of the Van Buren County Court permitting out-of-state travel for the purpose of visiting two residential treatment programs operated by Rite of Passage in Queen Creek, Arizona.

The invitation includes participation by the Family Division presiding judge, referee, probation officer supervisor, and a probation officer, to gain a firsthand understanding of the services, treatment protocols, and operations of the Desert Lilly facility for girls and Canyon State Academy for boys.

Commissioners said Rite of Passage has agreed to cover airfare, lodging, some meals, and local transportation expenses for the duration of the visit, scheduled from April 23 to April 25, 2025.

The only financial impact to the county will be minimal, limited to incidental meal expenses, if any, and mileage reimbursement from Paw Paw to the airport.

Commissioners approved the Van Buren Youth Fair Association's sublease of approximately 30 acres of fairground property to Vassar Farms for the 2025 agricultural season.

Under the terms of the lease agreement dated Feb. 25, 2014, between Van Buren County and the Van Buren Youth Fair Association, the association may sublease any portion of the leased premises with written consent from the county. The Van Buren Youth Fair Association has negotiated a one-year sublease with Vassar Farms for the use of approximately 30 acres of tillable land located within the fairground's property in Hartford Township, for the 2025 agricultural season beginning in Spring 2025 and ending Dec. 31, 2025.

The land in question is currently unused during the fairgrounds' off-season and would otherwise remain fallow, while the proposed sublease promotes beneficial agricultural use, enhances soil health, reduces weed and pest problems, and supports local food production.

Commissioners said approval was time-sensitive due to the upcoming spring planting season, and a delay could compromise the effective use of the land for cultivation in 2025. All income generated from this sublease will be retained by the Van Buren Youth Fair Association to support youth programming and the ongoing maintenance and operation of the fairground facilities.

Commissioners approved a contract between the Van Buren County Friend of the Court and MGT Impact Solutions for Title IV-D billing and consulting services at a quarterly rate of $2,250 beginning June 2025.

The Van Buren County Friend of the Court (FOC) participates in the federal Title IV-D program, which allows for reimbursement of up to 66 percent of eligible expenses associated with the administration of child support enforcement activities.

MGT Impact Solutions has provided billing and consulting services to the FOC for several years, including preparation and submission of the annual Title IV-D Cooperative Reimbursement Program application, monthly invoicing of reimbursable expenses, assistance in identifying eligible costs, audit support, and extensive technical assistance with the EGrAMS reporting system.

Commissioners said MGT's professional support ensures the accurate and timely recovery of federal funds and has consistently delivered value-added services critical to the ongoing operation and financial efficiency of the FOC's Title IV-D program.

Despite years of consistent pricing, MGT has proposed an increase in the quarterly contract rate from $1,750 to $2,250, beginning in June 2025.

Commissioners said the services provided by MGT are essential to the continued participation in and compliance with the Title IV-D Cooperative Reimbursement Program and could not be reasonably performed in-house without additional staffing or expertise.

Commissioners accepted the Great Start Collaborative Partnership Grant of $4,550 to support the Healthy Living Incentive initiative.

The Van Buren County Specialty Courts provide client-centered, holistic services that promote long-term recovery and well-being for participating families. Specialty Courts have been awarded a mini grant, "Healthy Living Incentive" initiative, which supports programming centered on education, nutrition, and community engagement for court participants and their families.

The initiative includes key activities such as cooking classes for parents, car seat safety checks, nutritional support, and family engagement events including a local movie theater rental, carnival-themed picnic, and family story time at the local library.

Funds will be used for supplies and events that directly benefit Specialty Court participants and their children, promoting healthy family habits and positive developmental outcomes, and equipping parents with resources that support their children's academic, emotional, and physical success.

The total proposed budget includes $2,500 for cooking class supplies, $500 for food boxes, $300 for movie theater rental, $300 for picnic activities, $450 for family story time, and $500 for gift baskets, all fully covered by the grant with no county match required.

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National Day of Prayer event to be held in Paw Paw

PAW PAW - The greater Paw Paw area's National Day of Prayer will be held Thursday, May 1, at noon at the VanBuren County Courthouse lawn, 212 E Paw Paw St., here.

The theme for the 2025 National Day of Prayer, "Pour Out to the God of Hope and Be Filled," was inspired by Romans 15:13: "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

An invitation is extended to those who would like to spend the lunch hour praying together for the community and nation.

Family Night with children's author at Lawrence Branch Library

LAWRENCE - All are welcome to visit children's author Denise Brennan-Nelson at VBDL Lawrence Community Branch Library on Wednesday, April 30, from 5 to 7p.m. Refreshments will be provided. A meet-and-greet will be held from 5 to 5:30 p.m., followed by the presentation from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and concluding with a book signing from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

The author will offer books for sale. Sleeping Bear Press has developed teacher's guides/activity pages for each of her books. Visit https://www.denisebrennannelson.com/books and click on the cover or text for each book.

The event is sponsored by Friends of the Lawrence Library.

Hours for the Lawrence Community Branch Library, 212 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, are Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 7p.m; Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For information about this or any other program, call (269) 674-3200.

Van Buren District Library is headquartered in Decatur with branches in Bangor, Bloomingdale, Covert, Decatur, Gobles, Lawrence and Mattawan.

Kids participate in Easter egg hunts all over county

The Paw Paw Community Easter Egg Hunt was held Saturday, April 19, at Kid's Paradise Playground. The free event, for children up to 12 years old, featured a "Great Prize" for those who found a Golden Ticket.
Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

The Lawrence Ox Roast & Homecoming Committee sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday morning, April 19, at the Lawrence Village Park. Crafts and games, sponsored by the Van Buren District Library, Lawrence Branch, were also available in the park during that time.
Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

The Mattawan Lions Club and Mattawan Business Association will host a Community Carnival and Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday April 19, at the Antwerp Activity Center, 24821 Front Ave., Mattawan. The all-ages community carnival featured games for 50 cents each, with proceeds going to the Mattawan Lions Club to raise money for community efforts. At noon, by the Van Buren District Library Antwerp Sunshine Library, children were invited to join the Mattawan Business Association (MBA) in an Easter Egg Hunt.
Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

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Historical Society plans yard sale, Museum grand opening

HARTFORD - Over the last several months, volunteers at the Van Buren County Historical Society have been sorting and cataloging donations in preparation for the 2025 season.

The season will kick-off with a Community Yard Sale, Saturday, April 26, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Van Buren County Museum, 58471 Red Arrow Highway, Hartford.

The sale will include selections of surplus and donated items culled from the museum's storage. A variety of collectibles will be available including antique furniture (tables, dressers, chairs), misc. glassware, farm tools, and other unique items, including a horse collar mirror.

For more information or to reserve a 10 by 10 space, ($20 fee), call Linda at (269) 674-315.

The Van Buren County Museum will open for the season on Thursday, May 1, from noon to 5 p.m. The museum's regular hours will resume - Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m.

There is no charge for admission, however all donations are accepted and appreciated.

A museum Grand Opening and Ice Cream Social will be held Sunday, May 4.

In addition to the ice cream social, there will be museum demonstrations and old-fashioned games.

Stolen ATV recovered, suspect faces additional charges

ANTWERP TWP. - Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott said that Van Buren County Sheriff's deputies were on patrol on Wednesday, April 16, at 7:55 p.m. in the 32000 block of Ewing Road in Antwerp Township, near Lawton, when they observed an ATV being driven on the roadway.

The deputy performed a traffic stop on the male driver of the ATV. During contact with the driver, a 38-year-old Lawton man, it was determined that he had a suspended driver's license. Further investigation of the ATV determined that it had recently been reported to be stolen. The suspect was placed in custody and during a search incident to arrest, methamphetamine and narcotics paraphernalia were located. The suspect was subsequently arrested for the above charges at the Van Buren County Jail.

The investigation into the stolen ATV is still ongoing. Anyone with additional information is asked to contact the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office at (269) 657-3101.

Register of Deeds receives master certified officer award

The United County Officers Association recently awarded Van Buren County Register of Deeds Paul DeYoung the Master Certified County Officer Award. The award was presented at the UCOA Annual Legislative Dinner in Lansing and presented by UCOA President, and Tuscola County Clerk, Jodi Fetting Rynearson. This award requires over 160 hours of County Officer training classes to qualify. "It is truly an honor to receive this award and have the opportunity to serve the citizens of Van Buren County." said DeYoung.

Photo courtesy/Paul DeYoung

Road Commission earns another IMPRESS award

The Van Buren County Road Commission (VBCRC) has earned its third statewide IMPRESS Award from the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan for its innovative Big Picture Leadership Program. Designed to enhance staff operational knowledge and foster leadership skills among Road Maintenance employees, this program sets a benchmark in professional development. Other awards included Collaboration for its Paint-a-Plow Program, which engages local students in promoting road safety and community involvement, and Operations for transitioning to In-House Roadside Mowing, enhancing operational efficiency and safety. Shown in the photo above, from left, VBCRC's W.C. Askew, commissioner, and Bret Witkowski, managing director.

Photo courtesy County Road Association of Michigan

LAWRENCE - The Van Buren County Road Commission (VBCRC) has earned its third statewide IMPRESS Award from the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan for its innovative Big Picture Leadership Program. Designed to enhance staff operational knowledge and foster leadership skills among Road Maintenance employees, this program sets a benchmark in professional development.

Identifying the need for leadership training at all staff levels, the VBCRC launched the Big Picture Leadership Program to address these challenges effectively. "The program covers critical topics such as leadership versus supervision, learning styles, communication strategies, cultivating a positive work culture, goal setting, maintaining confidentiality, navigating difficult conversations, and more," said Linnea Rader, VBCRC's Finance and Human Resources Director and Program Facilitator. She added, "We meet approximately once a month, and participants complete assignments between sessions that reinforce each topic discussed and provide feedback at the next session. The outcomes have been truly remarkable."

Among approximately 40 union employees, 14 initially enrolled in the program, with 13 remaining active participants over a year later. Notably, two participants have since been promoted to administrative supervisory roles, where they have excelled. Rader expressed her enthusiasm for offering the program again, highlighting its potential to further inspire leadership growth among staff.

The Big Picture Leadership Program stands as a testament to VBCRC's commitment to nurturing leadership at every level of the organization, spotlighting employee development and success. An independent panel of experts from Michigan's 83 county road agencies reviewed all submissions for the IMPRESS Award.

The three statewide IMPRESS Awards were given out at the 2025 County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan Highway Conference held in late March in Lansing.

IMPRESS Awards recognize county road agencies that demonstrate innovation on noteworthy projects in the categories of Communications, Operations and Collaboration.

Van Buren County Road Commission also received IMPRESS Awards this year in:

- Collaboration for its Paint-a-Plow Program, which engages local students in promoting road safety and community involvement.
- Operations for transitioning to In-House Roadside Mowing, enhancing operational efficiency and safety.

"Van Buren's multifaceted approach to innovation is a testament to their commitment to excellence," said Denise Donohue, CRA CEO. "Their efforts in education, leadership and operational improvements are paving the way for future success in county road management."

Paint-a-Plow has successfully engaged youth in road safety initiatives, while the leadership program and in-house mowing transition have both resulted in notable operational enhancements.

An independent panel of communications and operations experts from several of Michigan's 83 county road agencies judged all IMPRESS Awards submissions. Award recipients were honored for projects that solved time constraints, labor costs, communication barriers and fostered collaboration.

The 83 members of the County Road Association of Michigan represent the unified voice for a safe and efficient county transportation infrastructure system in Michigan, including appropriate stewardship of the public's right-of-way in rural and urban Michigan. Collectively, Michigan's county road agencies manage 75 percent of all roads in the state, including 90,500 miles of roads and 5,900 bridges. County road agencies also maintain the state's highway system in 63 counties. Michigan has the nation's fourth-largest local road system.

Three honored by Elks Lodge

The following awards were presented on April 14, 2025, by Spencer Campbell, ER of the South Haven Elks Lodge. The individuals were chosen for their outstanding contributions to the Elks organization and our community.

Owen Ridley, Citizen of the Year - Owen is a firefighter/paramedic for South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES). Owen is also the Captain of the SHAES Search and Rescue Dive team. Owen is married to Dawn (also a SHAES firefighter and on the dive team, as well as an Officer at the Lodge), has four daughters, and recently became a grandfather to triplets! He has served our community well for 32 years.

Barry Skuza, Officer of the Year - Barry is a Life Member at the South Haven Elks Lodge, having been a member for 48 years. Barry has served the Elks in many capacities over the years, and has been a Trustee on the Board of Directors for 10 years. Barry also volunteers for St. Basil Catholic Church in many capacities. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and has held positions at both the local and state level. Barry is the Treasurer for the South Haven Schools Foundation, and was the South Haven High School bowling coach for 15 years. Barry and his wife Diane have three sons and eleven grandkids.

Jody Gross, Elk of the Year - Jody has been on the House Committee at the South Haven Lodge for three years. He is always the first to step up to help with planning and implementation of the many events at the Lodge. Jody was recently in the right place at the right time when he noticed that a guest having dinner at the Lodge was choking, and he performed the Heimlich maneuver dislodging a piece of steak. Jody is also in the Garden Club and participates in all their planning and planting activities around town. He has been on the garden tour and takes great pride in his yard. Jody is also an avid pickleball player. He was a flight attendant for 40 years at American Airlines and retired several years ago. Jody and his partner, Joel, have a dog named Dixie and a parrot named Katie.

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Thursday, May 1 6 pm-7 pm ADULTS: Inviting Birds into Your Yard
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VIEWPOINT

Quicksand drama turns in to romantic relationship

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

I was flipping channels the other night when a question was asked. What did you fear most as a kid? There were a variety of answers but one of the answers was quicksand.

I immediately concurred. Quicksand was fear of mine for no particular reason other than as a kid I had heard horror stories of this person or that getting stuck, and even some not being able to get out without the help of emergency personnel.

I carefully watched my step when I hunted for bullfrogs in local swamps. I vividly remember a friend getting stuck in a swam nearly knee deep. It took us an hour to dig him out. It happened again, in a marshy area while fishing, This time I was the one that needed assistance.

Then as my quicksand thoughts waned, I saw a photo and read a post on social media about a man who was stuck waist deep in quicksand and was fearing for his life waiting for emergency personnel to arrive. The photo went viral, with thousands of people viewing O'Brien stuck in quicksand.

Mitchell O'Brien and Breanne Sika, co-workers at a recovery center in Traverse City, who were kind of dating were hunting for an unusual blue slag at sunset on Lake Michigan in Leland, when they encountered a large pipe snaking across the beach, spewing slurry from a hydraulic sledge that was vacuuming sand from the harbor bottom.

The hydraulic sledge is owned by Lelant Township, which periodically dredges the harbor. This year they are removing 60,000 cubic yards of sand, that they will in turn use to build up area beaches.

O'Brien stepped into the area where the sledge was spewing, and presto, he was knee deep in quicksand. O'Brien said, It didn't look that bad. It just looked like wet sand. Most of it was firm enough to walk on. Then all of a sudden, I was in a quicksand hole."

He added, "Man I was stuck stuck- like my left leg, I couldn't move it, it's like there was something holding it underground. It was crazy how hard it was there."

His partner called 9-1-1. Hampered by poor cell phone reception, the dispatcher hung up on her, mistaking her for a telemarketer. Finally she got through, and she said, "my boyfriend is stuck in the sand."

At that point, O'Brien, in quicksand, said it was a defining moment in their relationship. No longer were they co-workers, they were a romantic couple. Love was found, not over an expensive dinner, but as a boyfriend was sinking in quicksand. Certainly, a story for the grandkids.

A few minutes later emergency responders arrived, dug around his body a little, and freed him with a rope lasso. It didn't take long, the responders, although never having encountered this situation previously, were able to bring O'Brien to safety.

So, what were your greatest fears? And as an adult have you overcome this? Shoot me an email at wilcoxnewspapers@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from you.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reader disputes letter writer's assertions

To the editor,

The letter to the editor from John R. Young in the April 17 edition of the Courier Leader needs a few corrections. The demonstration in Paw Paw on April 5, as well as the one on April 19, were not funded by any organization or outside group. Any expenses incurred were paid for by the local participants. There were over 200 of your friends and neighbors present at each event peacefully exercising their constitutional rights of freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, epitomizing our American ideals.

Mr Young mentions the work of Elon Musk and DOGE whose efforts are fraught with a lack of oversight, numerous errors and obvious conflicts of interest. Mr Musk has multiple billion dollar contracts with the US government. Musk has downgraded his estimate of savings from 2 trillion to a few billion due to the lack of finding significant waste or fraud.

Mr Young accuses the Democrats of election fraud but there has been nothing reported on this issue although Republican state governments have been actively working on voter suppression. Mr Young's statement that Donald Trump was elected by "the vast majority of American voters" is simply not true. He did not even get a majority of the voters in 2024. He received 49.8% of the vote (76.8 million) while Harris received 48.3% (74.3 million), a difference of only 1.5%. Of all the eligible voters about 86 million didn't vote. So this was not a vast majority. Under a third of all eligible voters cast their ballots for Donald Trump.

Mr Trump's campaign promises to lower grocery prices and end the war in the Ukraine on day one, have not been kept. Grocery prices are still high and it now appears he has given up on a peace deal with Russia because Putin keeps stringing him along. He is not going to lower the national debt as he proposes a 4 trillion increase in the debt limit. Campaign promises he did not make, but that he probably should have told us about, was his plan to annex Greenland, make Canada the 51st state and take over the Panama Canal. I'm sure voters would have liked to be told of these questionable ideas in advance.

The Trump administration has cut USDA funding that provided meat and other protein for food pantries. This has adversely affected our own local food bank, Eleanor's Pantry. At the April 19 event we raised over $800 in support of this worthy cause.

I know I won't change Mr Young's mind with this letter but the record certainly needs to be corrected.

Kathleen Murphy
Paw Paw

Do your homework before vaccinating children

Hi Mr Wilcox

When will people start do their own Research in Vaccines ,without Big Pharma on media news doing it for you

when it comes to our health and Children's health you should know what ingredients goes into a vaccine,

some reason they think Mercury is ok, like red dye 40 in most kids snacks and candy, people our clueless just Believe what TV news tells them

which is brought to you my Big Pharma. Below is just 1 of many articles mentioning the lawsuits, like in 1997 the MMR was proven to give autism

but they kept that hush hush..why if their so safe. you can still find info on this and other side effects on vaccine till the big Pharma stop free speech

I know you wont run this because Truth is to hard to get out and people get mad at you when truth is stated

just had to respond to Justing Aguy hope you post the articles to warn people or at least get them to do some research for them self

if this letter can save one child it would be worth it wouldn't it?

Thanks

Donna Awomen

I put also sources below.

Source: $101 Million Dollar Vaccine Injury Award for Encephalopathy from MMR Vaccine

Injuries and Deaths Due to Vaccines Are a Real Risk, but Censored from the Public

The U.S. Government and Big Pharma, the main purchaser of advertising space in the corporate-sponsored "mainstream" media, consistently tells the public that vaccines are "safe and effective," and that anyone who dares to say otherwise, including honest medical doctors,

However, the fact that vaccines kill and injure people, including young babies and infants, is not a fact that is in dispute. The only question that is in dispute is how many lives are being destroyed by vaccines? No one really knows.

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (NVICP) was started as a result of a law passed in 1986 that gave pharmaceutical companies total legal immunity from being sued due to injuries and deaths resulting from vaccines.There were so many lawsuits filed against Big Pharma for vaccine injuries and deaths, that the pharmaceutical companies basically blackmailed Congress by stating that they would stop manufacturing vaccines unless they had legal protection.

Congress obliged and passed the NVICP bill which then President Ronald Reagan signed into law.

Certain aspects on the Constitutionality of this law have been challenged in court, but so far the law has been upheld, with the Supreme Court ruling that vaccines are "unavoidably unsafe."

So, even though your doctor may try to assure you that the vaccine they are about to give you or your child is "safe," be aware that the doctor is either being dishonest to meet a quota of patients that need to be vaccinated for certain financial benefits, or the doctor is woefully ignorant and only knows what was spoon-fed him/her in medical school and sponsored by Big Pharma regarding vaccines.

The truly effective doctors do their own research and seek what is best for their patients. (One doctor in Germany, for example, has investigated measles and claims no measles virus actually exists: German Supreme Court Upholds Biologist's Claim that Measles Virus Does Not Exist

The Deadly Measles Vaccine – More Die from the Vaccine than from Measles

In 2015, the Big Pharma-sponsored "mainstream" media covered a very one-sided story about a measles outbreak at Disneyland in California. The corporate media blamed the outbreak (from which no one died) on unvaccinated children, a claim that was not borne out by the facts (many who contracted measles were fully vaccinated, for example.)

But this event was used as a catalyst to change vaccination laws and policies all across the U.S. in favor of mandatory vaccines. In California, a law was passed to remove the philosophical and religious exemptions to childhood vaccines.

Absent from the corporate media and U.S. Government health officials' unified message in favor of mandatory vaccines to protect against measles outbreaks were cold, hard facts showing how dangerous the measles vaccine really is.

The measles vaccine is not available as a single vaccine in the U.S. but only as part of the 3-vaccine combo of MMR (mumps, measles, rubella).

I wrote an article back in 2015 to warn the public and expose the facts that were absent from the corporate-sponsored "mainstream" media, clearly showing that the measles vaccine was far more dangerous than measles itself, known historically as a non-fatal common childhood infection.

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY WILCOX NEWSPAPERS, LLC
PO Box 189, Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 657-3072 • wilcoxnewspapers.com

Publisher - Mike Wilcox
Graphics- Liz LaValle
Reporter - Paul Garrod & James Windell
IT - Jordan Wilcox

PERIODICAL RATE POSTAGE PAID AT PAW PAW, MI 49079-0129
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OBITUARIES

Mark Thomas Wangberg

Mark Thomas Wangberg, 72, of Iquitos, Peru, passed away April 15, 2025, with his wife by his side. He was born September 28, 1952, in Jacksonville, Florida, to the late Frank and Jean (Patterson) Wangberg.

Besides his wife, Irma, Mark is survived by two children, four step-children, and two grandchildren. He also leaves behind sisters Sue Martin (Robert) of Lakewood, WA; Sally Newton (Jim) of East Lansing, MI; Laura Denenberg (Irve) of Fort Collins, CO; and brother Chris Wangberg (Terry) of Malad City, ID, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Wangberg was an artist, teacher, and poet who grew up in Paw Paw, MI, graduated from Alma College, and proudly served as the 11th Alma College African Fellow, teaching in Nigeria. He continued his education at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia while teaching AP Art and Visual Art at Haverford Senior High School. He also was an instructor at the Main Line Art Center and volunteered in the Prison Arts Program and at the Children's Dialysis Center in Philadelphia. Following retirement, Wangberg traveled to Peru and volunteered in the Iquitos schools, teaching English and art, as well as introducing students to the importance of Earth Day concepts. Making ART made Mark Wangberg happy, and he LOVED teaching! While Wangberg chose to live in Peru in his final years, he never lost hope for a more peaceful America.

George Edward Fadel III

George Edward Fadel, III, 89, of Paw Paw, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at his home in Paw Paw. He was born Dec. 27, 1935, in Chicago, Illinois, the son of George Edward Fadel, Jr., and Adeline Ann (Jansen) Fadel.

George was a police officer for the Village of Paw Paw for 30 years and spent 28 of those years as the Chief of Police. He also taught Adult Education and High-Risk children's programs for over 20 years in Paw Paw. George loved nature and enjoyed feeding his squirrels and deer. He lived on Ackley Lake for 54 years, going out on his pontoon boat and enjoying the lake life. Above all else, George adored his family and grandchildren.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 66 years, Patricia Ann (Neaderhiser) Fadel; his children and their spouses, September Dawn (Trace) Kirvan, Jeffery Michael (Sherry Mastinbrook) Fadel and Jason Mark (Brenda Cannon) Fadel; grandchildren, Allisha Marie Fadel, Ashley Dawn Kirvan and Holly Ann Kirvan; his dog, Rocky; and dear friends, Bill and Cindy Booth, Mike and Mary Aalfs and Tommy and Margaret Bell.

George was preceded in death by his parents and sister, Lynn Cunningham.

In accordance with George's wishes, there will be no public services. Memorial contributions in memory of George may be directed to St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

Richard Lee Buss

Richard Lee Buss, 85, of Decatur, passed away peacefully on Thursday, March 27, 2025 at Rose Arbor Hospice in Kalamazoo. He was born April 2, 1939 in Lawrence, MI to Elwyn and Mildred (Jacobs) Buss.

The family will celebrate Richard's life with a memorial service at a later date at Decatur New Hope Community Church. A graveside service has been held at Hamilton Cemetery, Decatur. Memorial contributions may be given to Decatur New Hope Community Church. Arrangements entrusted to Newell Chapel, Decatur 269-423-2561. Those wishing to leave an online condolence for the family may do so at www.newell-chapel.com.

Richard was a graduate of Lawrence High School, class of 1957. He married Maxine Stam on June 23, 1962. He worked as a foreman for many years at Rudy Manufacturing in Dowagiac, retiring from Modine Manufacturing (formerly Rudy Manufacturing) in 2000. After retirement, he continued to enjoy farming and traveling. He was especially known for his sweet corn. Richard was involved in the Van Buren County Youth Fair, working with the livestock in the 4-H program. He was also a member of Decatur New Hope Community Church.

Richard will be missed by his wife of 62 years, Maxine Buss; his son, David (Suzanne) Buss; his grandchildren, Cayla, Matthew, Elizabeth (Cody), Alexandria (Max), and Benjamin; his great grandchildren, Maddix, Carter, Joseph, Kennedy, Ember, and Tessa; his nieces and nephews, Melvin (Nancy) Wharton, Gordon (Dawn) Wharton, Sharon (Scott) Jenning, Dan (Karen) DeLong, Julia (Dan) Walden, and Linda (Joe) Edwards; his brothers in law, Bob (the late Marilyn) Doroh, and Bob (the late Betty) DeLong; and many extended family members and friends.

He is preceded in death by his son, Mark Buss; his siblings, Robert Buss, and Dorine (Eugene) Wharton; and his parents.

New home accessories store to open in SH

Renae Paliani

By James Windell

A new business on Center Street in downtown South Haven will be holding its grand opening soon.

Lakeshore Trends at Home will occupy the recently vacant storefront at 335 Center Street. A candle store was previously located in the building but closed earlier this year.

Renae Paliani, the owner of Lakeshore Trends at Home, also owns Lakeshore Trends clothing store at 319 Center Street. Lakeshore Trends is a women's clothing and accessories boutique that has been in South Haven for six years.

"During the COVID pandemic," Paliani said in a recent interview, "we started to carry some home goods. The sales of those goods went crazy. So, when this store became available, I thought about it and then decided to put all my poker chips in."

The concept, Paliani explains, is to have a store that would offer almost anything that you would want in your home. "South Haven hasn't had a home goods store in a while, and we thought a concept that is similar to Lakeshore Trends for clothing could be great."

Lakeshore Trends at Home will carry rugs, some furniture, flowers, lamps, and art, as well as kitchen items.

"But it will be one and done," she said, "because we won't reorder items. It will be ever changing. The concept is just like we did in Lakeshore Trends – only on steroids."

She said that the space for At Home is much larger and provides for more inventory for the home, which means the store can accommodate kitchen items, including towels, bar ware, dishes and hand-carved wood cutting boards. Paliani pointed out that there is enough room in the store for a kitchenette area where food could be served during special events.

Lakeshore Trends at Home was open for what Paliani called a "Sneak Peak" on Saturday, April 19, however, the grand opening will be on or about May 10. "I would like to be open on Mother's Day weekend," Paliani said, "because more people will be in town."

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SPORTS

Paw Paw wins four straight in baseball

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's baseball team has improved to 8-4 after four straight wins in recent days.

The varsity baseball team got a conference doubleheader sweep over Plainwell on Wednesday April 16.

In Game No. 1 the Red Wolves fell behind early 1-0, but never looked back after defeating the Trojans 11-1. Andrew Lehto got the win on the mound going 5 dominant innings, allowed 4 hits, 1 ER, and 8 K's. He also helped himself at the plate going 2-4 with an RBI. Landon Buhl went 1-3 with a BB, SB, and a 2 RBI triple. Gunnar Goodell added an RBI double and Caden Bowen was 1-3 with a SB, BB, and an RBI. Grant Sholander had a pinch hit single that brought in 2 RBIs. Bryn and Carson each added an RBI.

In Game 2 the Red Wolves scored 6 in the last inning to pull out a 10-4 victory. Godell threw a 5 inning complete game and allowed 6 hits, 0 ER, and 5 K's. Landon led the offense going 3-3 with an RBI and 2 SB's. Remi Dempsey had a clutch bases loaded double that plated 3 RBIs. Ryan and Hayden Criger each had a single, BB, RBI, and 2 SB's. Maverick Johnson added a single and RBI. Andrew and Caden each singled.

On April 18, varsity baseball continued its winning ways by getting a DH sweep of Parchment on Friday. In Game 1 the Red Wolves scored early and cruised to an 8-2 victory. Bryn Carlsen kept the Panthers off balance on the mound getting the win. Bryn threw 5 outstanding innings, allowed 5 hits, 1 ER, and 7 Ks. Preston came in and threw 2 scoreless innings with 1 K. Leading the hitting attack was Andrew Lehto and Maverick Johnson. Andrew went 2-4 with an RBI while Johnson was 2-3 with a double and RBI. Hayden went 1-3 with 2 RBI's. Gunnar and Gavin each added a double. Caden Bowen hit a deep inside the park HR, while Ryan added a single.

In Game 2 the Red Wolves won 16-5. Remi Dempsey picked up the win on the mound by going 4 innings, allowed 5 hits, 0 ER, and 7 K's. Ryan Holmes and Andrew led the offense. Ryan was 2-3 with a BB, 2 RBI's, 3 runs scored and a SB. Andrew was 2-4 with a double, triple, and 3 RBI's. Remi added a bases loaded double and 4 RBI's. Caden added a single, SB, 2 RBI's, 3 runs, and a BB. Hayden added a 2 out 2 RBI single and Grant added an RBI single. Landon Buhl chipped in with a single. The Red Wolves record now stands at 8-4.

Upcoming games:
April 22- DH at home vs. Edwardsburg
April 23- DH away vs. Michigan Lutheran
April 26- home vs. Port Huron Northern and Marine City

Gobles track girls continue to shine

Libby Smith and Madison Cooley both placed 3rd in their event and came home with a plaque.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Gobles girls track team battled weather in the 40s.

"This did not keep our lady Tigers from setting 19 Ps and coming home with dual meet wins against both South Haven and Bridgeman," coach Andy Wood said. They Defeated South Haven 100-32 and Bridgman 95.33-37.67.

The highlight of the evening was Daisy Estrada smashing Gobles' school record in the 100 meter dash with a time of 12.34. The old record was 12.8 set in 2013 by Kim Barber.

"The very next race was a close one with the Gobles team of Olivia Platt, Ellie Wood, Ava DeYoung, and Madison Cooley coming out on top with a 4x200 relay victory by 0.1 seconds. Overall we won 11 of the 17 events."

Friday, April 18, a few of the distance runners traveled to Oakland University to run against some of the top runners in this half of the state. "Libby Smith and Madison Cooley both placed 3rd in their event and came home with a sweet plaque," Wood said. "Libby set a season record in the 3,200 meter run with a time of 11:26.7 and Madison set one in the 400 meter dash with a time of 1:01.77. Lauren Shaffer set an all time PR in the 1,600 meter run with a time of 5:38.09 and came in 18th place out of 38 runners."

Gobles boys track team gets two wins

Gobles track athletes have had another huge week.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Gobles track team on April 16 beat two teaks in a double at South Haven. The Tigers came away with some outstanding performances and twop team wins beating South Haven 75.5-60.5 and Bridgman 76 to 59.

Mason Mansfield won the 100m and 200m dash and anchored the 4x100m relay as well as clearing 8-6 in the pole vault competing for the first time in that event. Maximus Sager put together an outstanding firstattempt at the 110m high hurdles placing seond with a time of 19.84. Jose Boger also raced his first 110 high hurdles and placed fifth overall with a time of 20.64.

Jack Gieger won the shot put in his first competition this year with a throw of 40-4.5 and placed second in the discus at 92-11. Max Sager and Coal Otis placed first and second respectively in the high jump. And Nathan Ray placed third overall in the Long Jump and 2nd against Bridgman and South Haven while teammate Vinnie Romano IV placed 4th overall and 3rd against both Bridgman and South Haven.

"It was a great first dual meet performance," coach Mark Kline said The Tigers will be at Fennville Wednesday, April 23rd and then Friday, April 25 will be at Loy Norrix for the Don Lukens Invite. Then the following week Gobles is home April 28 against Allegan and Watervliet and then travel to Centreville on May 3.

On Friday, April 18, a few Tigers traveled to Oakland University to compete against some of the best in the state.

"Steven Juarez, Nathan Ray, and David Sager had great nights. Steven Juarez ran with courage and toughness but didn't set a PR but Nathan Ray and David Sager set PRs in the 400m Dash and 800m Run respectively," Kline said. Nathan Ray was sixth in the 400m dash (54.08) and David Sager was 3rd overall in the 800m run (2:05.18)."

Bangor soccer team wins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor girls soccer team won its first game of the season 2-1 over Comstock on Monday.

Freshman Isabella Macedo and Andrea Barajas-Gutierrez each netted a goal. Goalkeeper Solexey Calderon made three crucial saves in the second half to keep the Colts off the board, securing the win for the Vikings.

"It was a strong showing of resilience and teamwork as the Vikings earned their first-season victory, improving to 1-5," Antonio Rubles said

On Saturday, the Bangor soccer team traveled to Sturgis but fell to the Trojans with a final score of 8-0.

Despite the loss, Andrea Barajas and Isabella Macedo delivered solid performances on the field.

The Vikings will be back in action on April 23 at Marcellus. Bangor is home on April 24 with Lawton and on the road April 28 at Berrien Springs, at April 30 with Bloomingdale's and on May 3 at Niles Brandywine

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Lawrence softball team falls

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — The Lawrence Tiger Softball team dropped two games at home to Marcellus tonight.

Hailey Camp led the Tigers at the plate with two hits and drove in a run. Leslie Reed, Kaylin Leyva, and Evelyn Waite contributed with one hit each. Yuridia San Jaun provided spark on the base path by stealing 2nd and 3rd and eventually scoring after being driven in by a Soledad Mendoza fielders choice.

In the circle, Hailey Camp and Leslie Reed each struck out three Wildcats.

The Tigers will play Tuesday (April 22) at Decatur for their next conference matchup.

Lawrence's conference record is 0-3 and the overall record is 0-5.

Coming up, Lawrence is slated to play Bloomingdale's at home on April 28. Other home games will be with Hartford on May 1, with Bangor on May 5 and with Centreville on May 8. There's also a home date with Cassopolis on May 10.

Lawrence's baseball team had a wild double header on Monday against Marcellus. Lawrence lost the first game 17-2 in four innings and dropped the next game 21-6 in four innings.

Lawrence has a baseball twinbill at Decatur on April 24.

Lawton soccer girls make history

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — The undefeated Lawton Blue Devils girls varsity soccer team defeated Bridgman 4-0 on April 16 and increased their record to (4-0) becoming the first girls varsity soccer team in school history to start the season at 4-0.

Senior Tiara Ellis scored two goals, sophomore Emily Schubert and freshman Addy Miller each scored one goal. freshman Addy Miller recorded two assists and sophomore Allyson French picked up an assist.

Junior Emma Hackenberg recorded a shutout in goal.

On Monday, Lawton lost at home to Kalamazoo Christian 8-0 to fall to 4-1. It was a Southwest Athletic Conference game.

Lawton is 4-1 also in the conference. Kalamazoo Christian is 3-3-1.

Coming up for Lawton are road games at Constantine on April 23, at Bangor on April 24 and at Schoolcraft on April 30. There's a home game on May 6 with Parchment and a road take at Kalamazoo Hackett Catholic on May 7. This will be followed by home games on May 9 with South Haven and May 12 with Allegan and then road games May 15 at Delton Kellogg, May 16 at Comstock and May 19 with Saugatuck.

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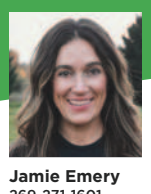
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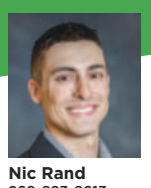
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NOTICE

BLOOMINGDALE TOWNSHIP ROAD MILLAGE INFORMATIONAL MEETING.

Sunday Apr 27, 2025, 2 pm to 3:30 pm held at the Bloomingdale Conservation Club, 16681 41st St, Bloomingdale.

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SPORTS

Adamson has strong career for Gobles

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Presley Adamson was a senior for Goble competitive cheer who had a strong four-year carer. She did the sport seven years overall.

Her position usually for Gobles was side base and tumbler.

"I (experimented) a little bit in middle school in other round but it was mostly tumbling and base,"

Adamson said adding the key to having success "was a lot of hard work and having good teammates that are supporting you all the time and having good support in general."

Adamson felt she improved a lot in her tumbling and jumps "because I got a lot of new skills I haven't been able to have before. Personally I got those news skills. We had a really good season in general even though we've had a lot of obstacles. We did really well with what we had and had new season higher scores from what Gobles has had in a long time."

Cheer is Adamson's only sport.

"I like the teamwork and that we do a lot of different stuff than what other teams do," she said. "You have to do your part how you're supposed to do it."

Bangor girls win two shutouts

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR —The Bangor Lady Vikings traveled to Marcellus last week to take on the Wildcats in another conference matchup. Isabelle Horvath was again dominant in the circle, striking out 18 in Game 1. The Vikings compiled 8 hits and won with a score of 10-0.

Lexy Wisniewski led the team in RBIs with 3.

Emily Wisniewski led in hits with 3.

Alexis Wisniewski, Lily Sugden, Kylie Withey, Josephine Snyder, and Jaelynn Little all added one hit each.

In Game 2, Isabelle Horvath had another great performance, striking out 15. Lexy Wisniewski did a great job behind the plate, and Carley McCoy had a strong defensive game at 1st base. The Lady Vikings won 6-0.

Offensively, Bangor had 6 hits, and Emily Wisniewski led the way with 2.

Lexy Wisniewski, Carley McCoy, Lily Sugden, and Kylie Withey all added one hit each.

Lexy Wisniewski led the team in RBIs.

Bangor is 7-1 overall and 4-0 in the SW10 after these two wins. On Saturday Bangor beat Allegan 1-0 and Martin 15-0 in tournament action.

South Haven baseball team loses to Hamilton, Hopkins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Both teams were strong on the mound on Saturday, but Hamilton pulled a 3-2 victory over South Haven Varsity Rams. Elijah Eddy started the game for South Haven and recorded 20 outs.

South Haven got on the board in the first inning after Isaac Chalupa doubled, scoring one run.

Max Verseput doubled to center field, which helped South Haven Varsity Rams tie the game at two in the top of the sixth.

Eddy took the pitching loss for South Haven. He went 6.2 innings, surrendering three runs (one earned) on six hits, striking out four and walking two.

Eddy, Tavin Burrows, Verseput, and Chalupa each collected one hit for South Haven. Verseput and Chalupa each drove in one run for the Rams.

In the next game, South Haven lost to Hopkins 10-5 on Saturday.

South Haven got on the board in the top of the first inning after Charlie Morse singled for a run, Charlie Hiatt singled, scoring two runs, and a wild pitch scored a run.

A single by Wyatt Dotson gave the Rams a 5-1 in the top of the third inning. Hopkins Varsity Vikings tie the game at five in the bottom of the fifth.

In the bottom of the sixth, Hopkins scored five runs on three hits to take the lead, 10-5. The biggest blow in the inning was an error that drove in two.

Jadon Schneider took the loss for South Haven in relief, going one inning, giving up five runs (one earned) on three hits, striking out two and walking none. Isaac Chalupa started for South Haven and allowed nine hits and three runs over three innings, striking out two.

Hiatt led South Haven Varsity Rams with two runs batted in. The first baseman went 2-for-3 on the day. South Haven ran wild on the base paths with five stolen bases for the game.

Mattawan baseball falls to St. Joseph

By John Raffel
Correspondent

The Mattawan varsity baseball team played at home last week vs the St Joe Bears. In game 1, the Wildcats got a 15-0 win. On the mound Kaden Jominy went 3 2/3 innings allowing one hit, zero runs, and striking out four. The offense was led by Ethan Bouma with three hits and Nolan Jominy with two.

In game two, Mattawan played to a 2-2 tie in six innings. Liam Walsh threw three strong innings allowing no runs, on two hits, while striking out four. The offense managed only three hits, one apiece from Ethan Bouma, Jake Vrba, and Brody Houseman.

The Wildcats are now 3-1-3 on the season.

Upcoming: at Lakeshore on April 24 and at Grandville on April 24 to face Grandville at 10 a.m. and Holt at noon.

Mattawan previously had a 7-7 tie with Harper Creek. Kaden Jominy drove in four runs on two hits. Kaden Jominy singled in the fifth inning, scoring two runs and singled in the seventh inning, scoring one run.

Max Vanantwerp pitched 3 1/3 innings for Mattawan, allowing one hit and zero runs while striking out six and walking one. Liam Walsh started for Mattawan, allowing four hits and three runs over two innings.

Mattawan had nine hits with two apiece for Kaden Jominy, Patrick Dougherty and Ethan Bouma.

Mayo named Student of the Month

The Paw Paw Kiwanis Club has selected Nolan Mayo as the Kiwanis Club's March Student of the Month. Mayo was nominated by teacher and band director, Amy Gronda, who said, "Nolan is an outstanding leader and role model...in the classroom and outside. He works hard and accomplishes what is needed to be successful in the classroom, on the performance stage and on the marching field. Nolan's leadership and musical talents greatly contribute to the success of the bands. He goes above and beyond, taking care of equipment and making sure the band is prepared for rehearsals and performances. What I am more proud of Nolan for is what he does outside the classroom. He is extremely polite and respectful to all he meets...especially adults. It is so refreshing to be able to have "adult" conversations with him. Nolan is not afraid to call out other students when they are acting or speaking inappropriately. He is not a bystander. He speaks up and steps up. I am extremely proud of Nolan and all he accomplishes in and out of the classroom/performing venue. Mayo plays percussion in the band and jazz band. He plans to pursue a career in sheet metal work. Shown in photo from left, Patrick Gorenchan, Kiwanis member, Jessica Mayo, mother, student Nolan Mayo, and nominating teacher Amy Gronda.
Photo courtesy/Paw Paw Kiwanis Club

Bloomingdale soccer team optimistic

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Mark Case is Bloomingdale's Varsity Girl's Head soccer and continues to lead a young program in the Southwest 10 Conference.

"Last season was our second season for this sport," he recalled. "We did decently. We were second in conference and ended with a 6-8-1 record overall for a second year team. Not too bad. Our conference record was 6-4.

"Last year we had five seniors graduate who were all key players in the middle of the field. This year we have a little younger team with a lot of freshman and only three seniors. I expect that we will do decently in conference with a a strong possibility of winning the conference. It's always a change from year to year and we don't know what the conference teams are bringing to the table yet.

"This week we have two conference games and that will be a big indicator of how the conference will go. We have strong numbers with 24 girls on the team and have a deep talented field, so substitutions will be as strong as the starting team."

Bloomingdale is home on April 12 with Battle Creek Pennfield.

"We need to work on simple things like being more quick with the passes and being accurate when we do and movement off the ball," Case said. "The conference has a couple stronger teams on it. Hartford is probably the one we struggle with most. We split the games last year with one win and one loss. Marcellus beat us last year a second time but because they are really aggressive and sent three girls to the hospital in the last game, which we lost. (Broken collarbone, severe concussion, and broken ankle).

We have started this season with two tough games. We lost to two teams that are Class B schools and very strong teams. It's a good experience for us as we learned what we need to work on against strong teams."

Mattawan track competes at Portage Northern

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN —
Mattawan's track team was seventh out of eight teams for the boys and eight out of 10 for the girls on Friday.
Winning medals for Mattawan were:

Boys:
Owen Fisher, 1,600 third place (4:33.7); 3,200 second place (9:56.3).
Connor O'Rourke 100m fourth place (11.48)
4x100 Throwers Relay second place Jackson Kalleward, Carter Agustin, Mathew Westra and Liam Bolt (53.01).
Teagan Kimble medaled for the girls in the high jump for third place with an effort of 4 feet, 10 inches.
Also for the boys, Jack Nicey was fifth in the 100 meters (11.49) and Nick DeYoung was seventh (11.62).
In the 200 meters, O'Rourke was fifth (23.07), and Nicey sixth (23.13).
In the 4x200 relay, Connor O'Rourke Nick DeYoung, Nicey and Silas Watering (1:33.03) was third.
Connor Wessells, Tanner Christensen, Braeden Gildea and Owen Fisher were fourth (8:52.94).
For the girls, the threesome of Kylee Drobeck, Madison Boone, Kinsley May and Katelynne Knapp were third (1:03.97).
Mattawan was scheduled to be at Portage Northern for a meet on April 22.

Paw Paw softball sweeps Three Rivers

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw is 8-1 in girls softball after sweeping Three Rivers 13-9 and 11-9 on April 18.

Paw Paw had 18 hits in the first game. Elizabeth Vanderburg had a home run. Bella Clemons was the winning pitcher. Aliya Edson, Elizabeth Vanderburg and Clemons had three hits apiece.

Cami Vandermeeden and Emily Roy also had multiple hits for PP.

Kourtney Nichols was the winner pitcher in the second game. Vanderburg had a home run as did Raegan Zache and Cami VanderMeeden. VanDerMeeden, Kailee Nichols, Alya Edson, Vanderburg and Clemons had multiple hits.

Paw Paw turned in a double play defensively.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

ALMENA TOWNSHIP SYNOPSIS
MARCH 19, 2025

Almena Township Board meeting was held March 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. and called to order by Supervisor Leduc.
Roll call: Pat Denny-Diget, Kelly Redmond, Mark Roman, Tim Kloosterman, Joe Leduc. Absent: Sandra Rickli (excused) John Wagner (excused)

a. Motion to approve agenda as presented
b. Motion to approve amended meeting minutes of February 19, 2025
c. Disbursements approved in the amount of $41,993.28 for February 25, 2025 through March 19, 2025
d. Commissioner Reports
e. Sheriff's Dept. report
f. Paw Paw Fire Dept. report
g. Public comment offered
h. Reports by officers were presented
i. Motion to accept high bid for property located at 38064 CR 653
j. Motion to accept fiscal year 2025-2026 regular board meeting schedule
k. Motion to accept the Paw Paw Area Fire Board and Protection Agreement
l. Motion to accept Almena Township-Antwerp Township Fire Protection Agreement
m. Public comment offered.
n. Meeting adjourned 7:28pm

Sandra Rickli, Clerk, Almena Township

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING
MARCH 14, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

- Meeting Called to Order by Supervisor Palenick 6:00 P.M.
- Board Members Present: Thomas Palenick, James DeGroff, Dennis Reynolds, Rebecca Payne, Lisa Zinkil
- Absent: None
- Guest Present: Bret Witkowski, Don Stull, Troy, Michelle Anderson
- Approved March 10th, 2025, meeting minutes.
- Approved the payment of $1,500 to the Van Buren County Resource and Recycling program.
- Approved $16 an hour for a substitute cook at the Senior Center.

Meeting Adjourned 7:08 P.M.

Rebecca F. Payne, Clerk

State of Michigan
36th Judiciial Circuit - Family Division
Van Buren County
PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING REGARDING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE
Case No: 2025----- NC • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
IN THE MATTER OF NATALIE MARIE BEACH

TO ALL PERSONS, including: (specify non-custodial parent's name here, if applicable) whose address is unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:
TAKE NOTICE: **Tami Anne Palmer** has filed a petition for name change.
A name change hearing will be held on **Wednesday, April 30, 2025 at Probate Court, Courtroom #3 - via ZOOM** before Judge Susan Metzger to change the name of:
Natalie Marie Beach to Natalie Marie Beach-Palmer

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2024-1180-DE
Estate of MARY W. DEEMER, DECEASED
Date of Birth: APRIL 10,1961 (4/10/1961)
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Mary W. Deemer, died September 22,2024 (9/22/2024)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Nathan G. Deemer**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 17, 2025

Attorney:
Foster Swift Collins & Smith P.C.
Charles A. Janssen #P30453
313 S. Washington Square
Lansing, MI 48933
517-371-8100
Personal Representative:
Nathan G. Deemer
6342 Sierra Court
Zeeland, MI 49464
616-283-9551

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-10656-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of JAMES F. BAXTER, DECEASED
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, James F. Baxter, died February 27,2025 (2/27/2025)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Cula F. Dowd and Vicki L. Berglund**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 17, 2025

Attorney:
Schuitmaker Moraitis Law Office, P.C.
Christopher N. Moraitis P87052
181 West Michigan Ave.,
Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177
Personal Representative:
Cula F. Dowd
56800 W. CR 365
Lawrence, MI 49064
269-674-9391
or
Vicki L. Berglund
P.O. Box 566
Glen Arbor, MI 49636
231-327-1240

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Estate of MANDY L. DEUEL, DECEASED
Date of Birth: SEPTEMBER 13,1940 (9/13/1940)
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Mandy L. Deuel, died February 6, 2025 (2/6/2025)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Eric Fisher**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 16, 2025

Attorney:
Elizabeth Robinson #P84345
4341 S. Westnedge Avenue, Ste. 1200
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
269-344-0700
Personal Representative:
Eric Fisher
52716 O'Keefe Road
Dowagiac, MI 49047

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S TRUST ESTATE
Estate of RALPH PARKER
Date of Birth: MAY 26,1933 (5/26/1933)
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Ralph Parker**, who lived at **820 Vineyard Drive, Lawton,** Michigan 49065 died **March 18,2025.** There is no probate estate.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against **RALPH PARKER** or the **RALPH AND JANET PARKER TRUST dated November 20, 2017,** will be forever barred unless presented to **Beth Dyer and Jonathan Parker** the named successor co-trustees within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 17, 2025

Attorney:
Charles S. Ofstein #P76256
DeMent and Marquardt, P.L.C.
211 East Water Street, Suite 401
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
269-343-2106
Co-Trustee's:
Beth Dyer
820 Vineyard Dr.
Lawton, MI 49065
414-651-1222
or
Jonathan Parker
1384 Bates
Birmingham, MI 48009
248-210-3370

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1057-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of ALICIA WRIGHT, DECEASED
Date of Birth: AUGUST 30,1989 (8/30/1989)
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Alicia Wright, died December 15, 2024 (12/15/2024)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Joyce Novak**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 16, 2025

Attorney:
Willis Law
Chico S. Obande #P77880
491 W. South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
269-492-1042
Personal Representative:
Joyce Novak
59591 34th Avenue
Bangor, MI 49013
269-249-8032

State of Michigan
PROBATE COURT VAN BUREN COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case No. 2025-1064-DE • Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of ELIZABETH K. MOONEY, DECEASED
TO ALL CREDITORS: **
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Elizabeth K. Mooney, died February 21,2025 (2/21/2025).
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Ronert Barry Casler**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 17, 2025

Attorney:
Schuitmaker Moraitis Law Office, P.C.
Christopher N. Moraitis P87052
181 West Michigan Ave.,
Ste. 1, P.O.Box 520
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3177
Personal Representative:
Ronert Barry Casler
3879 Crooked Creek Drive
Okemos, MI 48864
517-896-1803

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MICHAEL EDGELL; ATTY: SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, P.C. - SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, PC; 1ST PUB: 4/3/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25-000805-1; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT.
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on May 08,

Continues on page 11

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

NOTICE OF BIENNIAL ELECTION
Monday, June 2, 2025

Please take notice that one representative of each constituent school district within the Van Buren Intermediate School District boundaries will meet on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 5:00 PM, at the Van Buren Intermediate School District Administrative Office, 490 South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, Michigan.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect two (2) members to the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education. The two (2) vacancies will be filled for a term of six (6) years, expiring June 30, 2031.

Any individual interested in this position may pick up petitions and information from Suzie Roehm, Van Buren County Clerk, 212 Paw Paw Street, Suite 101, Paw Paw, Michigan, 49079. The phone number is (269) 657 – 8218. All candidates must be registered voters within the Van Buren Intermediate School District boundaries. The **deadline for filing petitions is Friday, May 2, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.**

The board of education of each constituent school district shall designate one representative as the voting delegate to said meeting.

_____
John Faul, Secretary
Van Buren Intermediate School District
Board of Education

Proposed Text Amendments to the City of Gobles Zoning Ordinance

Chapter 5. R-1 Neighborhood Residential District
Chapter 6. R-2 High Density Residential District
Chapter 9. C-2 Corridor Mixed Use District
Miscellaneous.

a.) Keeping of animals. No person shall keep or house any animal, honeybees, livestock or fowls, other than domestic household pets, except as permitted by subsection (b).

b.) Keeping of hen chickens. The keeping of hen chickens as an accessory use to a single-family dwelling in the R-1 and R-2 Residential Districts and the C-2 Mixed Use Districts is permitted subject to the following requirements:

1. The keeping of hen chickens shall be done on a noncommercial basis and be exclusively used by the people occupying the property and their guests as a food source for the consumption of eggs.
2. An initial annual permit from the City shall be obtained by any person who desires to keep chickens in the City of Gobles (April 1 – March 31). A renewal permit shall be valid for 2-years from the date of issuance. The City Commission may, by resolution, establish, change or revise a fee for such annual or biennial permit (or any partial year permit). The permit shall be non-transferrable and site specific. The permit shall be issued to the property owner, or the property owner's tenant with the property owner's express written permission The City Clerk/Treasurer shall issue the permit, but only after the City Public Works Director, City Clerk/Treasurer, City zoning administrator, or other City official has inspected and approved the premises, and the chicken enclosure so as to ensure that the facility is sufficient for the proposed keeping of chickens. The City Clerk/Treasurer shall maintain a record of the permit in the City offices.
3. Roosters and crowing chickens are prohibited.
4. A maximum of six chickens are allowed per residence.
5. Chickens shall be provided with a fully covered enclosure and shall be kept in the covered enclosure, except that chickens may be allowed outside of the covered enclosure if within a fully fenced rear yard. Fenced enclosures shall be subject to Section 11.04 Fences. It shall be a violation of this ordinance to have chickens outside of the required covered enclosure or fenced area.
6. All covered enclosures shall be subject to Section 11.02 Accessory Structures, except that covered enclosures shall be located no closer than ten feet to any property line and no closer than 20 feet to any residential dwelling on an adjacent property. The total size of the covered enclosure shall not exceed 36 square feet in size. It shall be elevated a minimum of 18 inches off the ground and the enclosure shall not exceed five feet in height.
7. Covered enclosures shall not be constructed of tarps, plastic, fabric, rubber, paper, cardboard, or other non-traditional building materials. They shall be constructed in a workmanlike manner that shall prevent rats, mice, or other rodents or vermin.
8. Chickens shall not be allowed within a residence, porch, or attached garage.
9. Appropriate feeder containers shall be used for all feeding and water and all unused or unconsumed food shall be adequately secured and stored after every feeding to prevent access by rats, mice, or other rodents or vermin. All feed and other items associated with the keeping of chickens shall be secured and protected in sealed containers.
10. Sanitary conditions shall be maintained. Any person keeping chickens shall keep or cause to be kept all manure, or offal from such animal securely and closely confined to or buried upon the premises and in such a manner as will prevent it from being scattered from such place or deposited into or upon any street, sidewalk, alley, gutter, storm drain, ditch, lake, wetland, or waterway, and such persons shall so cover and care for the chicken manure, offal and waste as to prevent any malodorous or offensive condition to exist and prevent any nuisance to arise therefrom, except that persons shall be permitted to use chicken manure as compost on their property provided that such composing is done in a manner that does not create an offensive or malodourous condition.
11. Any person keeping chickens shall not permit such chickens to become a nuisance as defined in Ordinance No. 46 Nuisance or to violate any other City codes and ordinances, including, but not limited to noise, odor and blight ordinances.
12. In addition to the municipal civil infraction fines provided in this ordinance, if notice has been served upon the applicant to remove one or more of the chickens, the city may assess a fine of $5.00 per bird per day for each chicken that has not been removed. A fine of $5.00 per bird per day may also be assessed for each chicken that is outside of the enclosure or fenced area. These fines are separate from the zoning ordinance enforcement penalties normally in effect.
13. Chicken coops and related supplies shall be removed from the premises within 30 days when no longer in use.

EFFECTIVE DATE
This ordinance shall become effective on the date of its publication.
Adopted: April 15, 2025 / Effective: April 24, 2025
Motion by Commissioner Teall, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett, to adopt the amendments to the zoning ordinance.
Ayes: Commissioners Teall, DeRidder, Zajda, Rydman, Blodgett
Nays: Commissioners Johnson, Hulin
Absent: None

Two local authors to sign books at South Haven Library

Rosalie Krizan

By James Windell

Two local authors who wrote books on heart transplants will be signing copies of their books at the South Haven Memorial Library on Thursday, April 24.

Rosalie Krizan, 29, wrote her book, "Her Giving Gift: A Journey Through Heart Disease," after she had a heart transplant two years ago. She says that it was a nurse during one of her open-heart surgeries who motivated her to write about her experiences.

"She told me, 'You have a story to tell, and you should write a book,'" Krizan said in an interview recently. "It took me four years to write my book."

Krizan, who grew up in Van Buren County and graduated from Paw Paw High School, was born with a congenital heart defect called Atrioventricular septal defect (AVSD). AVSD affects the valves and walls between the heart's upper and lower chambers. After struggling with the heart defect, and undergoing three open heart surgeries, she got a heart transplant.

She says she loves to write and started keeping a journal in high school. "That got me in the habit of writing every day," Krizan says. "I used my journals to write my book."

While she enjoys writing, she says that writing this book was difficult. "All of the memories kept coming back," she explains, "and some things were hard to talk about."

Yet writing her book allowed her to deal with the positives in her experience. "God gave me this beautiful story and life. Twice!" Krizan says.

Pamela Chappell didn't have a heart transplant, but her husband did. That's why she wrote "For Pete's Sake: Going Through Hell and Coming Out Whole."

She related in an interview that 17 years ago, after she and her husband Pete had been married only about 9 months, he collapsed in their home. An emergency trip to the hospital revealed that he was not having a heart attack. Instead, his heart was in failure. "The doctors tried all sorts of things to get a diagnosis and eventually he had a couple of strokes," Chappell recalls. "They knew he would likely die if he had another stroke, and that put him at the top of the list for a heart transplant."

Her book she says is about the whole experience they went through together – from his collapse until he came back home. Pete was in the University of Michigan Hospital for months and Pamela stayed with him in Transplant House, which she describes as "spartan but a lot less expensive than a motel."

Like Rosalie Krizan, Pamela kept a journal of her experiences, and she said that there were a great many emails back and forth to friends and family during the ordeal. "I thought that someone else might find this book helpful if they were going through this same experience or any other physical struggle," she says. "I want to let others know that with faith and prayers and support you could come out the other side."

Pamela Chappell

For her and Pete, she says that as South Haven residents they are living a fairly normal life. "We're happy and we live right on the lake. Life is good. We both feel very fortunate and blessed."

Both Pamela Chappell and Rosalie Krizan will be signing copies of their books at the South Haven Memorial Library, 314 Broadway, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm on Thursday, April 24, 2025.

Two sign Letters of Intent

Paw Paw High School senior, Grace Mitchell, signed a letter of intent to play basket-ball and golf at Alma College. She is the daughter of Rick and Sherrie Mitchell.
Photo courtesy/Paw Paw Public Schools

Paw Paw High School senior, AJ Rickli, signed a letter of intent on Wednesday, April 9, to play basketball for Waye State. Shown with Rickli are her parents, Aaron and Danielle Rickli
Courier-Leader photo/ Paul Garrod

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Continues from page 10

2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Michael Edgell a/k/a Michael D. Edgell married to Stephanie Edgell, signing to release dower Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: December 21, 2023 Recorded on December 28, 2023, Liber 1760, on Page 531, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): The Huntington National Bank Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Eight Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Eight and 12/100 Dollars ($208,168.12) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Lot 44, Sunset Estates, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 6 of Plats, Page 31 Commonly known as 25851 Pleasant Dr, Mattawan, MI 49071 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1557729

(04-03)(04-24)

NEW CCS PUB -> COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: PNC BANK V. DAVID HOLZWORTH; ATTY: TROTT LAW P.C. - TROTT LAW P.C.; 1ST PUB: 5/1/2025; ATTY FILE #: 499675L03; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
VAN BUREN COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT CASE NO. 24-074232-CH NOTICE OF JUDICIAL SALE The property described below shall be sold at public auction, by an authorized sheriff/deputy sheriff or county clerk/deputy county clerk, to the highest bidder, at the Circuit Court for the County of Van Buren, on the 26th of June, 2025 at 1:00 pm, local time. On said day at said time, the following described property shall be sold: The Subject Property is situated in the Township of Porter, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and is particularly described as: Lot 26, Block 2, Sandy Beach, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Liber 4 of Plats, Page 13, Van Buren County Records More commonly known as: 93140 Gravel Lake Dr., Lawton, MI 49065-8429 This notice is from a debt collector. Date of Notice: April, 21, 2025 Trott Law, P.C.
1559666

(05-01)(06-05)

PUBLIC NOTICE

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING OF THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW COUNCIL

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **The Village of Paw Paw Village Council will conduct a public hearing on Monday, April 28, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the Community Room of the Paw Paw District Library, located at 609 West Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI 49079..**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **that the item(s) to be considered at this Public Hearing** include, in brief, the following:
1. Proposed Overnight Camping Ordinance

Public comment will be taken at the hearing or written comment may be provided to the Village Offices prior to the meeting. Additional information regarding this meeting is available at the Paw Paw Village Hall, 111 East Michigan Avenue between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or by sending a written request to PO Box 179, Paw Paw, MI 49079.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids should contact the Village Clerk no later than five business days prior to the meeting to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations.

Karla Tacy
Village of Paw Paw Clerk

The Van Buren Intermediate School District is now accepting bids for the removal, replacement, new installation, and striping of asphalt totaling approximately 94,000 square feet located at 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064 as outlined in the bid packet. Bid packets are available for download at **www.vbisd.org** under District Services – Business Office. Bids are due **May 5, 2025, at 2:00 PM** at the Van Buren Intermediate School District Business Office, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids received after that time will not be accepted and returned unopened. The Board of Education shall not accept a bid unless it includes both sworn and notarized familial affidavit and Iran linked business affidavit. The Van Buren Intermediate School District reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any irregularities which it deems to be in the best interest of Van Buren Intermediate School District, and the right to award the contract to other than lowest bidder.

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Covert library to celebrate Children's Day

Join others for a celebration of Día de los Niños at the VBDL Covert branch on Wednesday, April 30, from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM.

This special event brings together children, families, and the community to honor the power of stories, literacy, and children. Enjoy an afternoon packed with fun activities for the whole family, including: food, games, stories, and book prizes for all!

Día de los Niños, also known as Children's Day, is a reminder that every child deserves access to books, learning, and a caring community. The Van Buren District Library is excited to celebrate this year and support a love of reading in every child. We can't wait to celebrate with you!

The VBDL Covert Branch is located at 33680 M-140 Hwy, Covert, MI 49043. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact the VBDL Covert Branch at 269-764-1298

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